ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An image recognition apparatus, method and program capable of discriminatively recognizing an object at an enhanced recognition rate despite an increase in the total number of reference images registered in image databases. When any individual person or public corporation for example is to be specified from the object image obtained by shooting the person or the like, one image database of the attribute corresponding to various situations, or familiarity to the object image is selected automatically, and then the person or corporation is specified from the shot image while referring to the reference images stored in the image database of the selected attribute. Therefore, even if the sum of the reference images is increased, since they are subdivided and classified corresponding to the attributes, the number of the reference images for each attribute can be reduced, and further the image database of the optimal attribute can be selected automatically in conformity to the situation of recognition such as date, time and so on. Thus, the number of the reference images can be minimized without the user's intentional manipulation, and the reference images are narrowed down due to the additional information of the situation.